श्रीमती सरोज दुबे : इनके पास किसी बात की जानकारी नहीं है। क्या करेंगे ?

श्री सभापति : आप बातचीत मत कीजिए। ये क्वेश्चन पूछना चाहती हैं।

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA : Sir, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government of India is monitoring the standards of teaching in Kendriya Vidyalayas and whether they have any plan to open Kendriya Vidyalayas in Karnataka.

डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी : सभापति जी, केन्द्रीय विद्यालयों के कार्यकलाप का हम समय-समय पर अनुक्रमण करते हैं। आपको जानकर खुशी होनी चाहिए कि इनके परीक्षा फलों में निरंतर सुधार हो रहा है। इनका परीक्षाफल आज सतासी प्रतिशत तक हो गया है। यह पहले अस्सी प्रतिशत से नीचे रहता था।

Establishing SAT-VU

*502. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :†
DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics and M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation are jointly launching a Semi-Arid Tropics Virtual University, which aims at working with the existing drought action programmes;

(b) if so, whether the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh would initially be covered by SAT-VU;

(c) if so, what are the other aims of this project

(d) whether any steps, in this regard, have already been taken; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics and M.S. Swaminathan Foundation in partnership with other institutions are

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy.

contemplating to launch a Virtual University Semi-Arid Tropics (VUSAT) to help mitigate the effects of drought and improve the livelihoods of vulnerable rural communities in India. Similar, partnerships are being sought for launching the VUSAT in drought-prone regions of South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa.

(b) Yes, Sir. The VUSAT work will be initiated in India in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. In each State, a host of key institutions will come together to establish a State-level hub, and will proceed to set up rural information centres each one of which will serve a number of villages around.

(c) The aims and objectives of this initiative are as follows :—

1. Educate and train a wide array of stakeholders in the dry tropics about drought mitigation, climate management and livelihood opportunities;

2. Communicate relevant and timely information for community mobilization to mitigate the impact of drought; and

3. Establish and sustain a virtual network of policy makers, researchers, educators, service providers and farm communities towards effective drought mitigation and climate management.

(d) and (e) The feasibility study for the VUSAT was prepared and discussed at a roundtable meeting organized in ICRISAT on 27th February, 2003.

श्री सभापति : सभी मैम्बर्स की इच्छा है कि आपके क्वेश्चन ज्यादा आते हैं। अगर सदन को आपत्ति न हो तो मैं यह मामला जे.पी.सी. को रेफर कर दूं।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री, विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी तथा महासागर विकास मंत्री (डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी) : इसमें आपने उनसे वह रहस्य जानना चाहा था । अगर रहस्य बता दें तो आपकी मर्जी है रेफर कर दीजिए। रहस्य पूछ लीजिए। अगर रहस्य से आप संतुष्ट हो जाएं तो जे.पी.सी. को रेफर करने की जरूरत नहीं है।

श्री प्रेम गुप्ता : सभापति जी, इसमें एक सुविधा यह हो सकती है कि सब मैम्बर्स को यह टेक्नोलॉजी ट्रांसफर कर दें।

श्री सभापति : अच्छा ठीक है। अगला क्वेश्चन कीजिए।

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Sir, I am a lucky man. Hence, I am getting more questions.

My supplementary is, a number of States like Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan are reeling under drought. I am very happy that ICRISAT and Swaminathan Research Foundation have come forward to set up a university and to help the people from the impact of drought. The Hon. Minister has mentioned in his reply that the Government is going to start this only in four or five States. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to when the Government is going to physically start this university in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, etc. What would be the real impact of this university in reducing drought and helping the drought-affected people in the country?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Sir, this is an agreement between the two private organisations—Swaminathan Research Foundation and ICRISAT—and is planning to start it very soon. So far, nothing has been finalised. They are planning to start it in early June. The idea is to disseminate information in the arid-tropics about the water management and about the drought-affected areas. So, it is a private initiative and the Government will extend whatever help it requires. But, I would say that it has not yet been started.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Sir, I am sorry to say, सभापति जी, यह क्या रिप्लाई है कि सोचेंगे, करेंगे ? No, no. The Hon. Minister must give a firm reply. The ICRISAT is a private organisation, it is funded by the USA. It is an international organisation. It was established at Hyderabad about 30 or 40 years ago. When they come forward, the Government must take a dynamic step. By taking this opportunity, the Government must extend all the facilities to the proposed university, though it is formed by the private people. So, Sir, I need a categorical assurance from the Hon. Minister on this. We are anticipating your dynamic action and commitment to start this university.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : As I said, it is a private initiative by ICRISAT and Swaminathan Research Foundation. As you have rightly pointed out, there are two countries involved in it. They are planning to start this in several States in June and they have identified several NGOs and Governmental Organisations which will be co-operating with them. So, there is no question of the Government not co-operating with them. Whatever the areas have been identified by the Government Organisations, we will, certainly, co-operate in those areas.

SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the ICRISAT and the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation have been doing exceedingly good work, particularly in this field. Now, in view of the aims and objectives, which have been stated in the reply, may I know from the Hon. Minister whether there is any plan of action to involve the Panchayati Raj Institution and NGOs in this very important area?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Sir, it is for the new SAT-VU organisation to decide as to whom they will involve in it. They have already identified several institutions with whom they will be working. They are : the Government, the Karnataka Drought Management Centre, the Government of Madhya Pradesh, and several national organizations are going to work with them. They have identified several open universities that will be working with them. But, as I said, it is still in the planning stage, and I want to reassure the Hon. Members that the Government will fully co-operate in this venture.

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Sir, out of seven States, identified for this scheme, Tamil Nadu is also one of them. I am grateful for it. In response to part 'B' of the question, it has been stated that a host of key institutions will come together to establish the State level . . . (*Interruptions*)

श्री सभापति : आप क्वेश्चन कीजिए। Whatever the Minister has said that is known to everybody.

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Government include more universities in the list of identified institutions?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Sir, this venture has already identified several open universities, with whom they will be working. And, if they want to expand it, as I mentioned, the Government will be willing to help them.

Violation of DPCO in finished formulations

*504. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a price control on imported formulations also;

(b) what is Government's policy and which are the products that have been granted price approval of import of formulations;